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ABSTRACT

The early career experiences of a group of young people from a sparsely populated out-migration area of Michigan were studied. In 1957, all the juniors and seniors enrolled in the county's 6 school districts responded to questionnaires which sought to explore several aspects of their situations near the end of high school. Factors examined included the students' opinions of the community, possible expectations to migrate, plans for further training or education, and expectations for entry into the work force. Students who participated in the original study were relocated in 1968, and information was sought on their experience in the intervening period. The restudy questionnaire covered events such as marriage and family formation, further education or training completed, military service, migration and residence, and occupational experiences. Findings from the 1968 study were that a majority of the subjects did move away from their home communities, that a little over one-half of the males and a few females served in the armed forces, that the subjects were dispersed throughout the occupational structure, that occupational achievement was related to residence, that many of the young people had married during the decade, and that most thought that it was necessary for young people to leave the area after high school to pursue desirable career objectives. (PS)

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PROFILES OF RURAL YOUTH:
A Decade of Migration and Social Mobility

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PROFILES OF RURAL YOUTH: A Decade of Migration and Social Mobility

by Jon H. Rieger, J. Allan Beegle and Philip N. Fulton[1]

RURAL YOUTH IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA

Introduction

Many questions have been raised concerning the experiences and problems encountered by young people from rural areas. How many young people leave their rural communities after high school? How many obtain further education? How soon do they marry and how does mate choice and timing of marriage affect their careers? What occupations do they enter and how does this relate to other aspects of their experience, such as migration? The answers to these and similar questions are of much interest to parents, teachers, counselors and students, as well as sociologists. Such information provides a basis for a more realistic appreciation of the factors that must be considered in career planning among young people from rural communities.

This study deals with the early career experiences of a group of young people from a sparsely populated outmigration area in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It covers 10 years, starting when the subjects were still enrolled in high school. There is a brief overview of their plans, attitudes and expectations as students. The discussion then moves to the events after high school, summarizing and interrelating various aspects of these young people's experience, including migration, educational and occupational achievement, marriage and family formation, and current opinions on certain topics. We also look briefly at some of their reflections on their experiences, and the insights they feel they have gained from them. Finally, an attempt will be made to summarize the results in terms of their possible contribution to our knowledge of the early career experience of rural youth, as well as their practical implications for youth growing up in similar rural areas today.

Previous Research

Occupation is central to an individual's career, but other factors, such as education, may have a direct effect on the level of occupational attainment. Mate choice and timing of marriage may be relevant and influential, but may exhibit

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less decisive impact. Migration is a prominent event in the careers of rural young people and often has extensive ramifications for educational and occupational achievement and mobility.

An adequate understanding of migration in the career pattern for rural youth depends on development of as complete a picture as possible of the many aspects of their situation and behavior. Their attitudes toward the community and parents, educational and occupational aspirations, marriage plans, and expectations to leave the community after finishing school are examples of inter-related factors bearing on later events.

Lack of community satisfaction (20) and the intent to get further education (8) have been shown to be associated with plans to migrate. In a study of migrants from a rural area of Colorado, "going away to school" was most often the reason for leaving (1). Migration intentions were directly related to high occupational aspirations among rural youth in Minnesota (25). The desire for improved job opportunities was also an important reason for leaving among migrant youth from a rural Kentucky area (21, 27, 29), while "economic and social improvement" was important among Indiana migrants (18).

The level of educational and occupational achievement apparently varies among rural youth from different regions of the country. However, persons from rural areas are disproportionately represented in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations (3, 6, 9, 13, 14). Blau and Duncan (4) found that migration from the home community seems to facilitate occupational attainment of rural men, but their level of achievement is often inferior to that of persons reared in the city.

The pattern of low occupational attainment is related to the characteristically low level of educational achievement among rural youth. Schwarzweller (21) found that less than 14% of a sample of youth from 5 eastern Kentucky counties had obtained any education beyond high school. Brown and Buck (5) found in a follow-up study of former Pennsylvania rural high school students 10 years after their sophomore year that about 26% had obtained 2 or more years of training after high school.

Rural youth seem to exhibit considerable attachment to their home community whether they have left to live in other places or remained in the local area. Schwarzweller (21) found that most young men who had left a rural area of eastern Kentucky wished to move, preferably back to their home community in Kentucky. However, nearly three-quarters of their counterparts still living in eastern Kentucky preferred to stay where they were. Confirming these sentiments, Schwarzweller found that 40% of the subjects who ever left eastern Kentucky returned within 6 years after their high school graduation. A similar stream of return-migration was found by Leuthold, *et al.* (12) in a study of Tennessee rural youth and by Yoesting and Bohlen (28) in a study of former Iowa high school seniors.

Many young migrants want to return to their home communities because of difficulties in adjusting to a different life style, particularly in urban areas. Caldwell (7) found that rural migrants to Lexington, Kentucky, exhibited several types of maladjustment to city life, including desertion, illegitimacy, and health problems. Schwarzweller (22) found that strong familistic values on the part of migrant youth from eastern Kentucky led to anomia and residential instability.

The studies cited above are examples of an accumulating body of research dealing with various aspects of the career experience of rural youth. These studies vary greatly in methodology and types of samples used. In constructing a picture of the structure of young people's careers, some investigators have used cross-sectional samples, e.g., Lipset and Bendix (15, 16), Blau and Duncan (4), and Taeuber (24). Others have attempted longitudinal designs, studying a single cohort over a period of time.

Many difficulties have been encountered in the longitudinal studies. Problems in relocating subjects after a lapse of time often severely afflict the studies which actually attempt "Time 1–Time 2" measurements of the same cohort. For example, Brown and Buck (5) relocated only about 68% of a sample of rural Pennsylvania males 10 years after their sophomore year in high school. Smith and Berg (23) secured data from 92% of a sample of former high school students from Michigan, but the time frame of the study was very short, only 10 months.

In some studies focusing on the experience of a single cohort, a source list is obtained, such as a record of past school enrollment. An attempt is made to locate the subjects after a specified time and to collect retrospective data dealing with their experience (17, 19, 21, 25). Other studies focus on particular research sites, such as a small town (18), a city (2, 3, 5) or a county (1, 11), and attempt to secure data on in-migrants and/or out-migrants.

These historico-reconstructive studies have had varying success in representing the experience of longitudinal cohorts. Bias in the samples has often been considerable. Investigators using source lists have often been unable to locate and secure data from a sufficiently high percentage of the subjects to preclude unrepresentativeness. Investigators limiting research to a particular place obtain data only for a "survivor group" of what was inevitably a larger original cohort. These studies may be further limited by "not-at-homes" and refusals.

The problem of unrepresentativeness caused by loss of data in these historico-reconstructive studies underscores the need for carefully conducted longitudinal research using maximum data recovery and spanning sufficient time to include the pertinent events in the early career experience of rural youth. Such research may serve as a test of inferences drawn from the cross-sectional and historico-reconstructive studies and as a means for interrelating many factors thought to be of significance in the careers of young people from rural areas. Such research may also provide an opportunity to explore issues not yet systematically developed in the literature.

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Ontonagon village (river and drawbridge in foreground). This is the largest settlement in Ontonagon Co.

THE ONTONAGON COUNTY STUDY

The Research Site

Ontonagon County, Michigan, is a rural area located on the shore of Lake Superior in the western portion of upper Michigan. The largest community in the county is Ontonagon Village, whose 1970 population was 2,432. Seven smaller hamlets are scattered about the county which geographically is the third largest in Michigan.

U.S. Route 45 north through the Ottawa National Forest. (The bridge crosses the Ontonagon River.)

Many of the county's approximately 10,500 inhabitants live in the open country. Agriculture, once an important economic activity in the area, occupies only a small fraction of the work force. This is due to the poor soil and short growing season, and to the remoteness of the area from potential markets. Lumbering was an important activity around the turn of the century when the region was first cut over, but is relatively insignificant now, except for the cutting of pulpwood used in a paper-making plant near Ontonagon.

The most important economic enterprise in the area is copper mining. There have been several episodes of vigorous mining activity in this area in the past, and these events were typically followed by gradual exhaustion of the deposits and closure of the mines. Such mining activity had all but ceased after World War II, but was taken up again with government support and an increase in the price of copper during the Korean War. By 1957, a new mine had been constructed at White Pine and the loss of population from the area which had continued for 40 years, was briefly reversed.

The county seems to have gained some population through inmigration during the period immediately following the opening of the White Pine mine, but has since shown a slight decline. Most of the outmigration occurs among younger age groups, particularly those finishing high school. There is some inmigration of middle-aged families and retirement-age persons.

Apart from the location of the county on the southern shore of Lake Superior and its natural beauty, its remoteness from urban areas imposes considerable hardship on local inhabitants. The nearest city, Ironwood, is about 60 miles to the southwest, and Houghton-Hancock is approximately 70 miles to the northeast. Those living in the southeastern part

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of the county are nearest to Iron Mountain, about 65 miles to the southeast.

The county also lacks many essential services and facilities. There is a shortage of doctors and other professionals and the only entertainment/recreational facility is a bowling alley in Ontonagon. There is no large commercial shopping center development in the area[2] nor any form of public transportation.

Despite the mining operation at White Pine, the overall atmosphere of the area is one of widespread depression, and, particularly, outmigration of the young. In this respect the county exhibits a pattern similar to that of many rural areas in the North Central Region of the U.S. For this reason, Ontonagon Co. serves as an ideal site for exploring the career problems and experiences of rural youth.

Settlers Co-op, Bruce Crossing. Small communities in this area depend heavily on stores like this for many needs.

~~Cox~~'s Store, Greenland. A few small businesses such as this still exist.

[2] A complete shopping center is planned as part of the construction at the village of White Pine.

Greenland church. Most churches in this area are wooden structures, such as this.

The Study Sample and Method

In 1957, there were 6 school districts of varying size in Ontonagon Co. (Three have since disappeared as a result of consolidation, while a new district was established at White Pine.) In the largest, Ontonagon, the typical senior class contained about 60 students; in the smallest, Rockland, the graduating class in recent years numbered between 5 and 10.

In May of 1957, all the juniors and seniors enrolled in the county's six school districts participated in a study of the "initial phase of voluntary migration" conducted by Michigan State University sociologists. The students filled out questionnaires which sought to explore many aspects of their situations near the end of high school (before migration). These included such factors as their opinions of the community, possible expectations to migrate, plans for further training or education, and entry into the work force. Data from the questionnaires were supplemented by information from school records dealing with academic performance and test scores. Results of this research were reported by Goldsmith and Beegle (10).

This sample of students constituted nearly the entire age cohort. According to the 1960 Census, 97.3% of the 16-17 years olds in the county were enrolled in school. Participants in the initial study included 269 persons, 127 males and 142 females. Ontonagon school district provided the largest group of informants, 111; the smallest group, 11, was from Rockland.

In March 1968, students who participated in the original study were relocated and information was sought on their experiences in the intervening period. Data were gathered using photo-offset questionnaires sent to current addresses, completed, and returned to the university. Follow-up phone calls and interviews in delinquent cases ensured maximum recovery of data.

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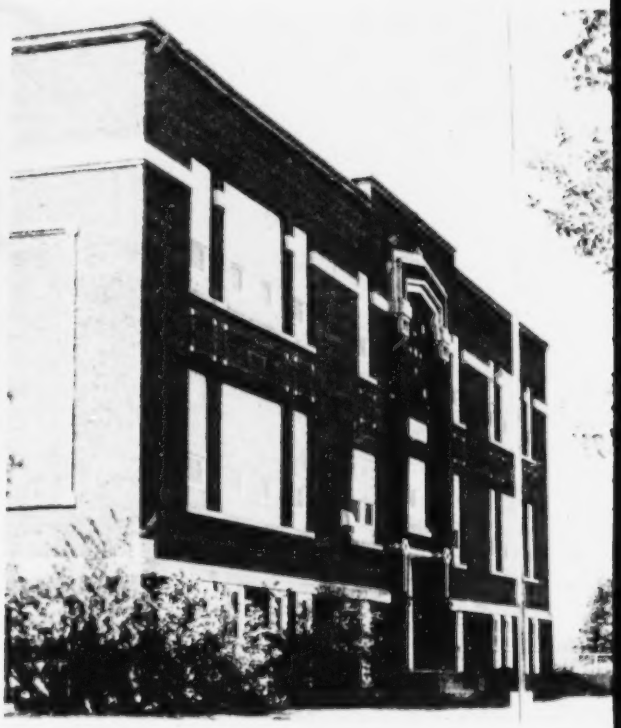

(Above) Ontonagon High School. With consolidation and new construction in 1967, a new high school has been built. (Right) Ewen High School. The study sample includes 70 persons who graduated from this school.

In three instances informants refused to assist in the restudy. In nine other cases informants indicated cooperation but failed to return the questionnaire. Three subjects had died. In all these instances substitute data were collected from secondary sources, including immediate family members, friends, and school officials. The validity of this type of data was confirmed in other cases where completed questionnaires were returned by the subjects themselves after such substitute data were obtained.

Usable data were obtained from 96% of the subjects and secondary source data for the rest, resulting in complete coverage of the original sample over a 10-year period. Preventing loss of data for any of the informants was important due to the small size of the sample in this study and the need to avoid bias in the results.

The re-study questionnaire attempted to cover events, such as marriage and family formation, further education or training completed, military service, migration and residence, and occupational experiences usually occurring early in young people's careers. Many of the subjects recalled participating in the original study and eagerly supplied detailed information about their experiences since high school. Many offered thoughtful insights concerning their experience and demonstrated an awareness of the issues facing young people growing up in rural areas today.

The large amount of data collected in the 1957 and 1968 studies was coded and transferred to IBM punch cards for more efficient processing and analysis.

Main Street, Rockland. This village was a boom-town during the mining era in the 19th century, but has since declined to about 400 residents.

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RESULTS

The Initial Situation in 1957

Attitudes Toward the Community

Students were presented with a series of descriptive statements about various aspects of the community and asked their extent of agreement or disagreement. The results for selected items are given in Table 1. Most were satisfied with the community and agreed that things of a "progressive nature [were] generally approved" and "leaders [were] capable and ambitious." They also felt that "persons with real ability [were] usually given recognition" and that "quite a few residents have really amounted to something."

There was somewhat less approval of other aspects. A substantial minority, 24%, felt that people did not mind their own business. About the same proportion felt that "not much [could] be said for a place this size." Over 30% disagreed with the statement that the "future of the community looks bright." In fact, the largest percentage of "undecided" responses occurred in connection with this latter statement; only 31.7% of the students professed confidence in the future of the community.

The community's lack of cultural and educational resources aroused the most disapproval. Three-quarters of the students indicated the facilities were inadequate.

Parents' Preferences

Students were asked what their parents had encouraged them to do after high school. About 19% said they were urged to get a full-time job and continue to live at home or as close to home as possible. Another 19% said their parents urged them to get the best full-time job possible, even if it meant moving to another community. A little less than 5% of the parents urged their children to continue their education or training and then return to live in the local community. However, nearly 43% recommended that their children "continue [their] education or training, and then get the *best* job possible even if [they had] to move to another community." The other students got a miscellany of advice.

Hence, at least 6 out of 10 students received the impression from their parents that the best course of action after high school would be to continue their education or training

TABLE 1. Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors' responses to selected opinion statements concerning the community

Statement	Sex	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %
Anything of a progressive nature is generally approved	Total	4.9	48.7	27.7	18.0	0.7
	Males	7.1	53.2	25.4	13.5	0.8
	Females	2.8	44.7	29.8	22.0	0.7
With few exceptions, the leaders are capable and ambitious	Total	6.7	56.5	24.5	10.0	2.3
	Males	7.1	55.9	22.1	11.0	3.9
	Females	6.3	57.0	26.8	9.2	0.7
People as a whole mind their own business	Total	3.0	21.0	16.1	40.1	19.8
	Males	4.0	22.2	19.0	40.5	14.3
	Females	2.1	19.9	13.5	39.7	24.8
The future of the community looks bright	Total	7.1	24.6	43.7	18.6	6.0
	Males	9.5	24.4	41.7	18.1	6.3
	Females	5.0	24.8	45.4	19.1	5.7
Quite a few residents have really amounted to something	Total	10.1	44.0	37.0	7.8	1.1
	Males	6.3	41.3	41.3	10.3	0.8
	Females	13.4	46.5	33.1	5.6	1.4
Persons with real ability are usually given recognition	Total	9.3	52.6	23.9	12.3	1.9
	Males	10.2	52.0	22.8	11.8	3.2
	Females	8.5	53.2	24.8	12.8	0.7
Not much can be said for a place this size	Total	3.7	20.1	15.3	46.3	14.6
	Males	5.5	20.5	14.2	46.4	13.4
	Females	2.1	19.9	16.3	46.1	15.6
Cultural and educational facilities, i.e., colleges, libraries, theatres and museums, are adequate	Total	4.5	9.4	11.2	33.0	41.9
	Males	3.9	10.2	15.8	29.9	40.2
	Females	5.0	8.6	7.1	35.7	43.6

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and/or get the best job available, even if it were in another area. This indicates that many parents recognized the possibility of outmigration in the future career of their children. Moreover, it appears they were very committed to helping their children during this crucial period. About 60% of the students said their parents were willing to give them a "great deal of financial help" in getting a start or continuing their education; another 38% indicated their parents would extend "some help."

Migration Expectations

Students were asked about their expectations concerning staying or leaving the district after graduation. Less than one fourth (Table 2) expected to remain in the local area after high school, and only a minority were enthusiastic about this prospect. The rest anticipated leaving the area. It must be admitted that the majority of those expecting to leave were not eager to do so.

TABLE 2. Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors' and seniors' migration / nonmigration expectations for the period after graduation

Expectation	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Eager to stay	21	7.9	15	12.0	6	4.3
Probably stay, but not eager to stay	41	15.4	20	16.0	21	14.9
Probably leave, but not eager to leave	128	48.1	69	55.2	59	41.8
Eager to leave	76	28.6	21	16.8	55	39.0
TOTAL	266(a)	100.0	125	100.0	141	100.0

(a) Three persons failed to answer this question.

On the other hand, about 3 out of 8 of those who were planning to leave (nearly 30% of the entire group) were *eager* to depart the area. (This proportion approaches nearly 40% among the females.)

Reasons for Leaving the Community

The widespread anticipation of leaving the local community after high school was not unexpected, and the students were asked their "main reason" for considering leaving. Half the students (36% of the males and 63% of the females) indicated lack of occupational training and career opportunities in the local community; another 20% (25% of the males and 18% of the females) wanted to get further education.

Seventeen percent of the males, versus 6% of the females, said their reasons were "wanting more things to do, meeting more people, seeing more of the country, etc." More than 6% of the males mentioned military service as the main reason. Other responses included marriage and courtship aspirations, the desire to get away from family and relatives, and to get out on one's own for awhile.

New Community Preferences

Many students expressed the desire to live in larger communities than those found in Ontonagon Co. after graduation. The males and females exhibited some differing tastes (Table 3). A higher proportion of males seemed to prefer to stay in the open country or in a village under 2,500, while twice the proportion of females preferred to move to a city over 100,000 or a suburb outside of a large city.

TABLE 3. Residential preferences of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Residential preferences(a)	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Open country	41	15.3	25	19.7	16	11.4
Village under 2,500	76	28.5	40	31.5	36	25.7
City of 10,000 to 100,000	80	30.0	42	33.1	38	27.2
City of over 100,000	16	6.0	4	3.1	12	8.6
Suburb outside a large city	54	20.2	16	12.6	38	27.1
TOTAL	267(b)	100.0	127	100.0	140	100.0

(a) Due to a typographical error in the 1957 questionnaire, the size category 2,500 to 10,000 was left out. This accident had the effect of reshaping the question interestingly into one drawing a distinction between communities of the size in Ontonagon Co. (i.e., less than 2,500), and those of definitely larger size, such as Ironwood and Marquette in the Upper Peninsula, and those of similar and larger size elsewhere.

(b) Two persons did not respond to the question.

Seventy-three persons identified a specific place they would like to live immediately after graduation and, although this sample may not be representative of the whole group of students, their preferences are interesting. About 11% indicated their present community or some other place in Ontonagon Co., 7%, some other community in the Upper Peninsula; 22%, the Detroit Metropolitan area; 8%, Milwaukee; 6%, Chicago; 19%, some other community in the general region of the Great Lakes. The remaining 27% listed communities outside the Great Lakes area. Minneapolis/St. Paul was mentioned by only one person, and such places as Duluth/Superior, Houghton/Hancock, Racine, and Kenosha were not mentioned at all.

Occupational Choice

At this stage, a career is perhaps foremost in the minds of young people. Thus, an inquiry was made into the "first choice jobs [students were] seriously considering as a lifetime work." The results are presented in Table 4.

Two hundred thirty-four of the students identified specific occupations they were seriously considering, and, not unexpectedly, the occupations selected differ somewhat by sex. Yet, an unusually high percentage of both sexes planned to go into professional or technical occupations: half of the males and about 4 out of 10 females. Equally interesting are the occupations rarely mentioned;

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very few of the males mentioned agricultural occupations, and management and sales were mentioned by only one person each, both males.

TABLE 4. Types of occupations seriously considered as first choice job by Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Occupational classification(a)	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Professional, technical and kindred work	104	44.5	56	50.0	48	39.4
Farming or farm management	4	1.7	4	3.6	0	0.0
Management, administration or proprietorship, except farm	1	.4	0	0.0	1	0.0
Clerical and kindred work	62	26.5	0	0.0	62	50.8
Sales work	1	.4	1	0.9	0	0.0
Craftsman, foreman and kindred work	27	11.6	26	23.2	1	0.8
Operative and kindred work	12	5.1	12	10.7	0	0.0
Service work, except private household	10	4.3	2	1.8	8	6.6
Farm labor or foreman	1	.4	1	0.9	0	0.0
Labor, except farm and mine	12	5.1	10	8.9	2	1.6
TOTAL	234	100.0	112	100.0	122	100.0

(a)The classification scheme is a slight adaptation of that used by the U.S. Census.

Why did these young people select these particular jobs? To find out, students were presented a checklist of possible factors involved in job choice and asked to indicate conditions which applied to them. Interest developed out of experience, family encouragement, school studies, and admiration for someone in a particular field were the reasons most often given. These and other factors, as well as male-female differences, are shown in Table 5.

Approximately half the males and females said their occupational choice was based on "interest developed out of experience." Of the females, 51% felt their choice was "encouraged by [their] family," a reason listed by about 45% of the males. Interestingly, counseling and testing ranked low in the list of factors influencing occupational choice.

The students were asked to identify the attributes they were looking for in their life's work. Those qualities mentioned by males were: security, 67%; friendship with fellow employees, 66%; chance for advancement, 63%; time to enjoy oneself, 59%; money, 57%; and prestige or respect, 36%. For females, the rank order was: security, 75%; chance for advancement, 72%; friendship with fellow employees, 70%; money, 48%; time to enjoy oneself, 41%; and prestige or respect, 39%. The attribute least mentioned by either males (13%) or females (8%) was "power and authority." "Public recognition" and "freedom of behavior" were also infrequently mentioned.

TABLE 5. Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors' and seniors' reasons for selecting the occupation considered their first choice job

Reason	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Interest developed out of experience	134	49.8	64	50.4	70	49.3
Encouraged by family	120	44.6	47	37.0	73	51.4
Suggested by school study	78	29.0	28	22.0	50	35.2
Admired someone in the job	71	26.4	36	28.4	35	24.6
Advised by friends	64	23.8	28	22.0	36	25.4
Most profitable work I could get	60	22.3	34	26.8	26	18.3
Suggested by magazines and books	53	19.7	30	23.6	23	16.2
Suggested by counseling and testing	35	13.0	17	13.4	18	12.7
Suggested by TV or Radio	17	6.3	6	4.7	11	7.7
Suggested by motion pictures	10	3.7	4	3.1	6	4.2

Educational Aspirations

Of particular interest were the students' plans for further education. Thirty-six percent of both males and females planned to attend college; 11% of the males and 3% of the females planned to go to a trade school. In addition, 2 males and 1 female contemplated apprenticeship training. Forty-five (including 5 females) expected to enter military service soon after graduation. Most of these felt military service delayed definite occupational plans. Some thought they'd "get it out of the way and then decide what to do next." A few felt that employers hesitated to hire them until their service obligation was settled.

Long Range Residential Preferences

The students were asked where they would like to live 20 years after high school. Preferences differed somewhat from the responses to the earlier question concerning the period immediately after high school. The subjects found Ontonagon Co. more attractive as a place to reside in 20 years, than right after school. The percentage of preference for the hometown or other local community rose from 11% to 49% over that time-span. On the other hand, the preference for places outside the Great Lakes region dropped from 27% to 16% and that for large metropolitan areas within the region (e.g., Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee) in each case declined. Again, certain places are absent from the list of those chosen: Houghton/Hancock, Duluth/Superior, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Racine and Kenosha.

Generally, then, the students expected to leave Ontonagon Co. after high school and to experience other types of living while getting further education, seeking initial employment, or completing military service. However, many felt

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that someday they would like to return to the type of community they left, and in half the cases, that meant Ontonagon Co.

The Post High School Decade 1957-1968

The purpose of this section is to provide a picture of events over the period of 10 years following high school. Some information on how these young people felt about their experiences and the insight they derived from them is also included.

Marriage

Most of the former students married within 10 years after high school graduation. A tabulation of marital statu at the end of the decade[3] is presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6. Marital status at end of post high school decade of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Status	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Single (never married)	35	13.2	27	21.6	8	5.7
Married (first marriage)	213	80.1	90	72.0	123	87.2
Married and separated, widowed or divorced (Total)	18	6.7	8	6.4	10	7.1
Remarried	7	2.6	3	2.4	4	2.8
Single	11	4.1	5	3.9	6	4.3
TOTAL	266(a)	100.0	125	100.0	141	100.0

(a)Excludes three deceased cases.

As can be seen from the table, a higher proportion (22%) of the males remained unmarried at the end of the decade than females (6%). About the same proportion of males and females who had married were subsequently separated, widowed or divorced during the period, nearly half of whom later remarried.

From the wedding dates listed in the restudy questionnaires, it was possible to compute the average time after high school graduation of the first marriage. The former students married, on the average, 43 months after high school, with males marrying considerably later than females (59 months vs. 32 months).

Mate Selection

Fifty-seven percent of the males and 45% of the females married persons whose hometowns were within Ontonagon Co., somewhat over half of whom came from their own community. Another 10% of the males and 17% of the females selected a mate from an Upper Peninsula community

[3] The follow-up data cover the period through June 1967 for the 1957 seniors, and through June 1968 for the 1957 juniors who graduated in 1958.

Residential street, White Pine. This picture gives some idea of typical level of living in the county. Some housing is newer and some still older than that shown.

Residential street, Ontonagon. These houses are of relatively recent construction.

Farm, Greenland. The land here is not presently being worked.

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outside Ontonagon Co., while 7% and 11%, respectively, married someone from the Lower Peninsula. Eighteen percent of the males and 16% of the females had spouses from outside the Great Lakes region; the remainder married persons from communities within the region.

Residence

Current residence was associated with marriage dates. Those living in the county at the end of the decade had generally married earlier than those living elsewhere. While this relationship was only slight for males, it was rather dramatic for females. Women living in the county after 10 years had married typically within about 16 months after high school graduation; those living elsewhere married in about 37 months. Nonmigrants were more likely to marry someone from the local area than those who left.

Family Formation

Nonmigrants tended to have children sooner after marriage and to have larger families than migrants. Migrants had their first child about 18 1/2 months after marriage. Nonmigrants had theirs after 15 months. The mean number of children born per-year-of-marriage was higher for nonmigrants than for those who left. Hence, migrants tended to defer marriage and family and were more "free" to be mobile. Among the concomitants of that mobility is a tendency to have smaller families.

Migration

How many of these young people actually left the county sometime during the decade, when did they first leave, and where did they first go? On the basis of the data, we find that 246, or over 91%, left the county and lived elsewhere for some period during the 10 years. This includes all but 6 males and 17 females.

The great majority (82%) of those who left after graduation did so within the first year (Table 7). Restudy data show that many departures occurred within the first 6 months and essentially in two "waves." The first wave occurred during the first month or two after graduation, as many young people left the area to find work. The second wave developed in the fall as students left for various colleges.

Almost all the females who ever left their hometowns had already departed within the first three years (97.6%), while more than 8% of the males who left, departed subsequent to the third year.[4] This difference is reflected in the average elapsed time in mean years. Males left, on the average, about .91 years after graduation; females about .66 years.

[4] However, 17 women and 6 men never left their hometowns at all during the decade. When these permanent residents are included, it is still the females who exhibit the greater tendency to migrate during the first 3 years as well as over the long run; 95.9% (122 out of 142) of the females left their community during the three years, compared to 87.4% (111 out of 127) of the males.

TABLE 7. Time of first departure from home community after graduation of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors who migrated during post high school decade

Time of first departure	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Before normal date of graduation to end of 1st year	201	81.7	96	79.3	105	84.0
Within 2nd year	22	8.9	12	9.9	10	8.0
Within 3rd year	10	4.1	3	2.5	7	5.6
Within 4th year	4	1.6	4	3.3	0	0.0
Within 5th year	2	0.8	1	0.8	1	0.8
Within 6th year	3	1.2	3	2.5	0	0.0
Within 7th year	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.8
Within 8th year	3	1.2	2	1.7	1	0.8
TOTAL	246	100.0	121	100.0	125	100.0
Average time in years	.783		.910		.660	

The rapid departure of most males and females from their home communities after graduation indicates that migration is characteristic at this stage of the life cycle. If migration occurs as part of the career sequence, it takes place at a predictable time and as part of a rather specific chain of events. It does not occur randomly through the 10-year period.

Initial Destinations of Migrants

Where did these young people go when they first moved away from their home community?

The pattern of initial migration reveals that nearly half (47%) of the destinations were within Michigan, mostly in the Upper Peninsula (Table 8). Equal proportions of males and females went to other communities in the Upper Peninsula. However, a majority of the males (20 out of 27) went to the Houghton/Hancock area, while nearly half of the females (13 out of 27) went to Marquette. Of those going to the Lower Peninsula, very few males (3 out of 18) chose the Detroit area, while most females (17 out of 27) went directly to the biggest metropolitan area of the state.

About half of those who left Ontonagon Co. during the 10-year period went initially to some location outside Michigan. Almost one quarter of them, in fact, migrated substantial distances, i.e., outside the region of the Great Lakes. This long distance migration was more frequent among men than women.

Persons migrating to communities within the Great Lakes region were particularly attracted to cities along the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan, especially Milwaukee. Kenosha attracted more males (due to its then expanding auto industry) than is indicated in the record of "first moves." Some males moved there on their second move or subsequent to military service. Chicago attracted fewer persons than Detroit, although it is larger and closer to Ontonagon Co.

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TABLE 8. Location of destination on first departure from home community of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors who migrated during post high school decade

Location	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Other community in Ontonagon Co.	17	6.9	7	5.8	10	8.0
Upper Peninsula community outside Ontonagon Co.						
Houghton/Hancock	27	10.9	20	16.5	7	5.6
Marquette	18	7.3	5	4.1	13	10.4
Other	9	3.6	2	1.7	7	5.6
TOTAL	54	21.9	27	22.3	27	21.6
Detroit metropolitan area	20	8.1	3	2.5	17	13.6
Other Lower Peninsula community	25	10.2	15	12.4	10	8.0
Duluth/Superior	2	0.8	0	–	2	1.6
Minneapolis/St. Paul	8	3.3	2	1.7	6	4.8
Milwaukee	16	6.5	5	4.1	11	8.8
Racine	4	1.6	1	0.8	3	2.4
Kenosha	8	3.3	6	5.0	2	1.6
Waukegan	2	0.8	0	–	2	1.6
Chicago metropolitan area	11	4.5	5	4.1	6	4.8
Other community in the Great Lakes region	23	9.3	16	13.2	7	5.6
Other community outside the Great Lakes region	56	22.8	34	28.1	22	17.6
TOTAL	246	100.0	121	100.0	125	100.0

TABLE 9. Size of community of destination, first departure from home community, of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors who migrated during post high school decade

Size of community	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Open country or village under 2,500	29	11.8	10	8.3	19	15.2
Town or city 2,500 to 10,000	35	14.2	23	19.0	12	9.6
City of 10,000 to 100,000	46	18.7	18	14.9	28	22.4
City of over 100,000	29	11.8	14	11.6	15	12.0
Metropolitan area over 500,000	69	28.0	21	17.3	48	38.4
Military locations of indeterminant size	38	15.5	35	28.9	3	2.4
TOTAL	246(a)	100.0	121	100.0	125	100.0

(a)Excludes the 23 persons who never moved out of their home community.

About 7% of the young people had said they would like to move to some other community in Ontonagon Co. after graduation, and 7% *did* move. Another 7% listed some other community in the Upper Peninsula. Twenty-two percent relocated there, many in Houghton/Hancock, which had not been mentioned by anyone. While 22% chose the Detroit area, only 8% went there. Eight percent listed Milwaukee, and 8% moved there. Chicago had been mentioned by 6% and drew only 4 persons. Some communities not thought of at all were the first new locations for some former students, e.g., Duluth/Superior, Racine and Kenosha. A few more persons migrated long distances after graduation than had expected to (27% as compared to 23%).

When the initial destination communities are classified by size, we find some contrasts to earlier preferences (Table 9). Nearly 44% expressed a preference for the open country or a village under 2,500. But, adding the 8% who never left their community to those who moved to similar places, only about 20% managed to realize such a preference. About 26% expressed a desire to live in a community of over 100,000 or in a metropolitan area. On first moves nearly 40% went to such locations.

A higher proportion of males had expressed a preference for the open country or a rural community, but only a little more than half as many males as females initially moved to such places.[5] The early marriage pattern among females may have contributed to this outcome, often inhibiting their migration far from the rural area of Ontonagon Co.

Apart from marriage, the role of family and kinship ties influenced the choice of destination. Among those who left for reasons other than to go to college or to join the service, a majority (62%) went first to places where relatives resided. Eighty-five percent of these felt the presence of relatives had either "some effect" or a "major effect" on their decision to go there.

Reasons for Migration

The subjects were asked their reasons for having initially left Ontonagon Co.

The most common reasons for leaving the home community after high school were finding work (34%) and getting further education (31%) (Table 10). Next in importance is military service, reported mostly by males. Family and marriage were important for females. These included women moving with their families after high school or to their husbands' residences, or leaving because of a change in their husbands' employment or lack of employment in the local area.

Reasons having to do with community features (either the home area or the destination), such as good or bad climate, activity or peace and quiet, living costs, seem to have had little to do with the decisions for initial departure. Adventure–wanting freedom, excitement, a vacation, "to see the country," or a "change of scenery"–did not seem to significantly influence decisions. No health reasons were mentioned.

[5] If the numbers of males (6) and females (17) who did not move at all are added to these figures, the reversal is even more extreme.

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TABLE 10. Reason given for first departure from home community by Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors who migrated during post high school decade

Reason	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Work related	85	34.7	42	34.7	43	34.7
Military related	42	17.2	39	32.3	3	2.4
Education related	77	31.4	38	31.4	39	31.5
Family or marriage related	35	14.3	1	0.8	34	27.4
Area or place related	3	1.2	0	0.0	3	2.4
Adventure related	3	1.2	1	0.8	2	1.6
TOTAL	245	100.0	121	100.0	124	100.0

A summary of military service participation reveals that during the decade 70 persons (67 males, 3 females) served in the armed services.[6] Fewer than a dozen have made service careers.

Education

An unusually high proportion (32%) attended college during the post high school decade (Table 11); most started such training shortly after graduation. Schools located nearby in the Upper Peninsula drew 52% of the college attendance.

TABLE 11. First colleges attended by Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors who enrolled in academic institutions during the post high school decade

Institution	Total	Males	Females
Michigan Technological University (Houghton)	17	16	1
Northern Michigan University (Marquette)	15	9	6
Suomi College (Hancock)	11	8	3
University of Michigan (Ann Arbor)	5	5	0
Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti)	3	3	0
Gogebic Community College (Ironwood)	2	1	1
Michigan State University (East Lansing)	2	1	1
Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo)	2	0	2
Central Michigan University (Mt. Pleasant)	1	1	0
Wayne State University (Detroit)	1	0	1
Other colleges and universities outside Michigan	27	11	16
TOTAL	86	55	31

Almost twice the proportion of men (43%) as of women (22%) attended college for some period during the 10-years. The rate of college attendance is notably higher, especially for the men, than typically reported for young people from rural areas. This suggests that a high value is placed on education in this economically deprived rural area. The strongest expression of dissatisfaction among the subjects while they were still in high school was the lack of cultural and educational resources in the local area.

Of the one third of the former high school students who enrolled in college, more than half finished a 4-year degree. And of these, nearly half (22 out of 45) later obtained graduate-level advanced training of some kind.

Many young people also obtained other types of training beyond high school. Thirty-five persons received trade or technical training, 36 took short courses and evening courses. Such training was taken in various institutions and facilities, including military schools. One person completed an apprenticeship in an industrial trade.[7] Thus, a *majority* of the subjects completed some form of additional training over the 10 years designed to enhance their educational or technical qualifications.

Occupational Attainment

The distribution of the men by occupational category at the end of the decade is shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12. Types of occupations held at end of post high school decade by male Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Occupational Classification(a)	No.	%
Professional, technical and kindred workers	29	23.2
Managers, officials and proprietors, except farm	6	4.8
Clerical and kindred workers	10	8.0
Sales workers	3	2.4
Craftsmen, foremen and kindred workers	25	20.0
Operatives and kindred workers	30	24.0
Service workers, except private household	3	2.4
Farm laborers and foremen	1	0.8
Laborers, except farm and mine	9	7.2
Students	8	6.4
Not employed	1	0.8
TOTAL	125(b)	100.0

(a) Based on U.S. Census categories.
(b) Two males were deceased by the end of the post high school decade.

The heaviest concentrations are in the operative (24%), professional (23%) and craftsman (20%) categories. Only 1 person was involved directly in agriculture, as an agricul-

[6] Although 70 served in the military sometime during the decade, only 42 persons indicated military service as the reason for initially leaving their home community in Ontonagon Co. (Table 8). This is not necessarily inconsistent in that undoubtedly many of those ultimately serving in the military had by that time already left Ontonagon Co. for other reasons.

[7] Among the 72 who received these various types of training, 10 were included in the count of college attendees previously discussed because either a) other, academic style education was also received by them, or, in a few cases, b) the technical training was received in an academic institution. Allowing for this overlappage, a total of 148 out of the 269 persons (about 55%) obtained college, technical, trade, or apprenticeship training after high school.

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tural laborer. A small proportion had gone into management positions of various kinds (5%), clerical positions (8%), sales work (2%), and service trades (2%). A few others were working as laborers (7%). Eight persons were academic students at the end of 10 years; one person was unemployed.

The liberal proportion in the professional category reflects the relatively large number of 4-year college and advanced degrees earned. Overall, the occupational attainments of the men represent, even at this early stage in their careers, an advance over the status of their fathers.

The assessment of vocational achievement among the females is more difficult. Some married after high school and were not employed outside the home; others took only "temporary" jobs. Still others, including a number who obtained further education, held jobs not commensurate with their qualifications. Furthermore, the occupational structure is not as open to females as to males. There is also a tendency to measure female "achievement" in terms of the status of their mates: that is, females tend to have status conferred on them through marriage.

Analysis of our data reveals that only 51 of the 141 women (36%) were employed outside the home at the *end* of the 10-year period. Yet, all but 16 were employed at sometime or other before that point. The highest-level job ever held by each female was classified according to the standard categories of the Census (see Table 13).

Of the highest level jobs held by females during the decade, the largest proportion (47%) was in the clerical category. Most held positions as secretaries, stenographers, typists, bookkeepers, cashiers or clerks. Twenty-five persons obtained jobs in the professional area, most of whom were teachers. Another 17 were employed in service trades, principally as waitresses.

TABLE 13. Highest level occupations ever held during the post high school decade by female Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Occupational Classification(a)	No.	%
Professional, technical and kindred workers	25	17.6
Managers, officials and proprietors, except farm	2	1.4
Clerical and kindred workers	66	46.5
Sales workers	7	4.9
Craftsmen, foremen and kindred workers	1	0.7
Operatives and kindred workers	5	3.5
Private household workers	2	1.4
Service workers, except private household	17	12.0
Laborers, except farm and mine	1	0.7
Never employed	16	11.3
TOTAL	142(b)	100.0

(a) Based on U.S. Census categories.
(b) One female was deceased by the end of the post high school decade, leaving a total of 141.

An unusually high percentage (23% of the males and 18% of the females) attained high status occupations, i.e., in the professional and technical category, within the brief span of 10 years after high school. This compares favorably with the U. S. population, in which the proportion of persons so employed is approximately 12%. This re-enforces the impression of a high value placed on education in this area.

Income

In 1957 the average income of families from which our sample came was somewhat less than $4,300. Fewer than 10 of the students' parents' incomes were greater than $9,000. The distribution of family incomes for our informants (personal incomes in the case of single persons) for the year 1967 is shown in Table 14.

TABLE 14. Family income (personal income, if unmarried) for the calendar year 1967 of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Income category	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under $2,500	4	1.5	3	2.4	1	0.7
2,500 to 3,999	11	4.1	8	6.4	3	2.1
4,000 to 4,999	27	10.2	12	9.6	15	10.7
5,000 to 5,999	29	10.9	15	12.0	14	9.9
6,000 to 6,999	31	11.7	13	10.4	18	12.8
7,000 to 7,999	41	15.4	21	16.8	20	14.2
8,000 to 10,000	54	20.3	29	23.2	25	17.7
Over $10,000	69	25.9	24	19.2	45	31.9
TOTAL	266	100.0	125	100.0	141	100.0

An unexpectedly high proportion of the cases are in the "over $10,000" category, an upward range of uncertain variability. Moreover, the family/personal incomes of the women in the group outstrip those of their male classmates.

By 1967, one fourth of the subjects had family/personal incomes over $10,000 and nearly half (46%) had incomes of $8,000 or more.[8] Probably fewer than 10% had incomes as low as the $4,300 average of their parents in 1957. Some of the lower 1967 incomes were merely transitory, as in the case of persons who were students at that time. A number of others had sustained a period of unemployment between jobs during that year.

At the time of the re-study, informants were asked if their incomes were increasing or decreasing. About 68% thought they were earning more than a year before, about 9.5% felt they were earning less, and the rest felt that their incomes were fairly steady.

The overall results in respect to family/personal income at the end of the post high school decade seem consistent with the occupational progress of these young people. They span a good part of the range of the income structure itself, with a liberal representation of incomes reflecting occupational success.

[8] These high incomes derive from the fact that in a number of cases both husband and wife were employed during 1967.

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Migration and Career Achievement

The relationship of occupation and income to residence is significant in the careers of rural youth. For this group of former high school students, migration was a critical factor in education, and further education is the key to occupational mobility. An analysis of the comparative occupational achievement and income of migrants and non-migrants reveals that migration seems to enhance the probability of rising in occupational and income structures.[9]

Combined with the completion of further education or training beyond high school, the trend is very strong indeed. Persons migrating from the local community after high school often obtained more training and thus higher status jobs. (Some of those who left the area returned before the end of the decade, falling in an intermediate position between the permanent non-migrants and migrants in many respects.)

By staying in the area after high school, one must trade potential advances in education, occupation, and income for other benefits or advantages felt to be obtainable in the local area. Many who stayed felt that such a trade-off was worthwhile and some who left expressed a strong desire to return to the local area. Many migrants felt they could not satisfy larger life goals in the local area, and sacrificed any advantages of living there for the gains to be made from leaving.

Current Residence

At the end of the post high school decade 30% of the sample resided in their original community in Ontonagon Co. (Table 15). Another 10% lived in some other Ontonagon community. Thus, while more than 9 out of 10 of these former high school students left their hometown after graduation, 4 out of 10 now reside there or in a community nearby. Hence, return migration is evident already within the 10-year period. (Recall that the Ontonagon area held more attraction as a place to live after 20 years than it did for the period immediately after high school.) Return migration was more characteristic of males than females. Of the 35 women living in their home community, 17 never left, whereas of the 46 males residing in their hometowns, only 6 never left.

Most of the 24 persons living in the Upper Peninsula, but outside Ontonagon Co., live in the Ironwood/Bessemer area or in Marquette. None live in Houghton/Hancock. This is in contrast to the period immediately after high school, when half of those who first went to another Upper Peninsula community outside the county went to Houghton/Hancock. Many went, of course, for schooling. It may be that the current absence of informants in this area reflects its declining economy.

Of the 96 living outside Michigan after 10 years, about 44% live in communities scattered around the Great Lakes. The biggest concentration outside the Great Lakes region is in southern California, where 15 members of our sample now reside. The number living outside the Great Lakes region at the end of the decade (54) was not unlike that soon after high school (56). The biggest change over the period was in the number living in the Great Lakes region

TABLE 15. Location of community of residence at end of post high school decade of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Location of community	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Home community in Ontonagon Co.	81	30.4	46	36.8	35	24.8
Other community in Ontonagon Co.	27	10.1	10	8.0	17	12.1
Upper Peninsula community outside Ontonagon Co.	24	9.0	14	11.2	10	7.1
Detroit metropolitan area	19	7.1	8	6.4	11	7.8
Other Lower Peninsula community	19	7.1	3	2.4	16	11.3
Duluth/Superior	2	0.8	1	0.8	1	0.7
Minneapolis/St. Paul	2	0.8	0		2	1.4
Milwaukee	9	3.4	3	2.4	6	4.3
Racine	1	0.4	0		1	0.7
Kenosha	8	3.0	6	4.8	2	1.4
Waukegan	1	0.4	1	0.8	0	
Chicago metropolitan area	6	2.3	4	3.2	2	1.4
Other community in the Great Lakes region	13	4.9	6	4.8	7	5.0
Other community outside the Great Lakes region	54	20.3	23	18.4	31	22.0
TOTAL	266	100.0	125	100.0	141	100.0

TABLE 16. Size of community of residence at end of post high school decade of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Size of community	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Open country or village under 2,500	130	48.9	64	51.2	66	46.8
Town or city 2,500 to 10,000	14	5.3	5	4.0	9	6.4
City of 10,000 to 100,000	42	15.8	25	20.0	17	12.1
City over 100,000	23	8.6	8	6.4	15	10.6
Metropolitan area over 500,000	54	20.3	23	18.4	31	22.0
Military locations of indeterminant size	3	1.1	0	0.0	3	2.1
TOTAL	266	100.0	125	100.0	141	100.0

[9] The rank order mean socioeconomic status for the males at the end of the post high school decade was as follows: migrants to small cities, 2,500 to 50,000 population (highest); migrants to large cities, 50,000 and over (second highest); migrants to other rural communities, under 2,500 (third highest); persons residing in their home communities (lowest). See Jon Hill Rieger, "Geographical Mobility and Occupational Achievement of Rural Youth: A Ten Year Longitudinal Study of an Upper Michigan Sample," Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1971.

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but outside Michigan. This area accounted for 74 persons after high school, but by the end of the decade, only 42 remained.

The distribution of residence by size of place at the end of the 10 years is shown in Table 16. A majority live in urban areas of varying size, the rest in rural communities or in the open country. Over one fourth are living in large cities (over 100,000), a proportion somewhat greater among females than males. This sex difference is generally consistent with preferences expressed in high school and with the first locations to which former students moved.

Geographic Mobility Patterns

Only a small minority of the sample have been nonmobile or moved only once (Table 17). A majority of the subjects lived in 5 or more places[10] during the decade. Sometimes this simply reflects moves back and forth between 2 different places, but often it has meant exposure to many different communities. Thirty-one of the subjects had moved at least once a year, and one individual had had 23 residences during the 10-year period. See Tables 18 and 19 for summary of the extent and frequency of returns to Ontonagon Co.

TABLE 17. Total number of residences during the post high school decade of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

No. of residences	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1 (never left home community)	23	8.5	6	4.7	17	12.0
2	14	5.2	3	2.4	11	7.8
3	36	13.4	12	9.5	24	16.9
4	42	15.6	20	15.8	22	15.5
5	35	13.0	23	18.1	12	8.5
6	33	12.3	16	12.6	17	12.0
7	26	9.7	15	11.8	11	7.7
8	17	6.3	8	6.3	9	6.3
9	12	4.5	7	5.5	5	3.5
10	11	4.1	4	3.1	7	4.9
11-15	17	6.3	10	7.9	7	4.9
Over 15	3	1.1	3	2.3	0	0.0
TOTAL	269	100.0	127	100.0	142	100.0

This pattern of back-and-forth movement is not restricted to those who happen to be living in the county at the end of the decade, however, for many of those now living elsewhere also returned 1 or more times. In fact, almost 40% of the latter moved back twice or more.

Within the total sample of former students, several groups are distinguishable in their varying residential ties to Ontonagon Co. There is a small group of "permanent nonmigrants"—persons who have never left their hometowns. Another group of about 112 could be called "permanent migrants," having left after high school and never returned. Then there is a large segment—about half the total sample—in an intermediate category, exhibiting some degree of residential vacillation over the 10 years. These individuals lived elsewhere for a while after high school and returned to their hometowns on one or more occasions, some being in an "away phase" at the end of 10 years, others in a "return phase." These three broad groups are not exclusive, since some in-county residents may leave in the future and some migrants may return.

Former students living in their hometowns at the end of the decade were asked if they planned to move out of Ontonagon Co. Those living elsewhere were asked if they might move back.

Data reveal that 31% of the subjects anticipate another move, either out of or back to Ontonagon Co. (Table 20). Among those living in the county at the end of the decade, about 1 out of 5 felt there was at least a 50% chance of moving away; of those living outside the area, 1 out of 10 indicated a 50% chance or better of moving back. The proportion of those thinking about moving back is about half that considering moving away. This may reflect the limited opportunities available within the county to attract potential inmigrants.

The pattern of residence at the end of the decade and the anticipated possibilities of moving back to or out of Ontonagon Co. seem to depend generally on the level of attachment for the area. Our informants were asked about their ties to Ontonagon Co. Fifty-seven percent of those who lived there after 10 years categorized their ties to the area as "moderately strong" or "very strong"; only 35% of those living elsewhere had such ties. But fewer than 6% of those living in-county indicated "moderately weak" or "little or no ties at all" to Ontonagon Co., while 27% of the non-residents so described their ties. The rest thought they had average ties to the area.

Assessment of Career

During the restudy the informants were asked how they thought "things [had] turned out" compared with their high school expectations. The females appear to be more satisfied with their progress than the males (Table 21), although about 1 out of 10 in both groups was undecided. Thirty-eight percent of the women and 35% of the men said things turned out better than expected; 12% of the men and only 5% of the women felt they had turned out less well. Most felt that things had turned out about as they had expected they would.

[10] The count starts with the home community and includes all moves having any major or permanent character, or which involve exposure to new and different places. Thus, different duty stations to which an individual was ordered while in the military service were counted, as were the different schools attended by them as civilians. Summer residences between college years in communities other than the home community were counted but returns to the home community between college years were not. In cases where an individual moved back and forth between his home community in Ontonagon Co. and some other area for extended periods of employment, each move is counted. Hence, the totals may appear somewhat inflated compared to self-estimates by individual subjects since they may not have considered themselves to have "moved" in going away to school or into the military service, etc.

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TABLE 18. Extent and frequency(a) of circular migration among Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors living in their home communities at the end of the post high school decade.

Sex	Residence in home community at end of PHSD: Total	Nonmigrants: Never left home community	Circular migrants: Left home community at least once and returned				
			Frequency of returns				
			Total	1	2	3	4 or more
Total:							
No.	81	23	58	42	12	3	1
%	100	28	72	–	–	–	–
Males:							
No.	46	6	40	28	9	2	1
%	100	13	87	–	–	–	–
Females:							
No.	35	17	18	14	3	1	0
%	100	49	51	–	–	–	–

(a)Extent=proportion of persons who migrated and returned; frequency=number of times an individual migrated and returned.

TABLE 19. Extent and frequency(a) of circular migration among Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors living outside their home communities at the end of the post high school decade

Sex	Residence outside home community at end of PHSD: Total	Permanent migrants: Never returned to home community	Circular migrants: Left home community and returned at least once				
			Frequency of returns				
			Total	1	2	3	4 or more
Total:							
No.	185	112	73	45	27	1	0
%	100	61	39	–	–	–	–
Males:							
No.	79	46	33	21	12	0	0
%	100	58	42	–	–	–	–
Females:							
No.	106	66	40	24	15	1	0
%	100	62	38	–	–	–	–

(a)Extent=proportion of persons who migrated and returned; frequency=number of times an individual migrated and returned.

TABLE 20. Estimates of the probability of moving out of/back to Ontonagon Co. by Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Probability	If living in: Estimate of the chance of moving out		If living outside: Estimate of the chance of moving back	
	No.	%	No.	%
Better than 75%	3	2.9	4	2.6
50% to 75%	5	4.8	0	0.0
About 50% - 50%	13	12.5	13	8.6
25% to 50%	7	6.7	14	9.3
Less than 25%	76	73.1	120	79.5
TOTAL(a)	104	100.0	151	100.0

(a)Four persons living in and seven persons living outside of Ontonagon Co. did not answer the question.

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TABLE 21. Evaluation of "how things turned out": present situation vs. expectations while still in high school of Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Evaluation	Total		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less well than expected	21	8.3	14	11.8	7	5.3
About as expected	108	42.9	49	41.1	59	44.4
Better than expected	93	36.9	42	35.3	51	38.3
Don't know	30	11.9	14	11.8	16	12.0
TOTAL	252(a)	100.0	119	100.0	133	100.0

(a)Fourteen persons failed to answer the question.

Handicaps

With 10 years of experience behind them, and the benefit of hindsight, what handicaps did the former high school students identify in trying to "get ahead"? Limited education was by far the biggest factor identified by the men as a handicap to the progress of their careers (Table 22). It is nearly 4 times as prevalent as personality problems or motivation, 5 times as important as financial problems, and 8 times as important as inexperience or lack of job opportunities.

TABLE 22. Estimates of the "greatest handicaps to [their] getting ahead" in the decade since high school, by Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Handicap	Total %	Males %	Females %
Family obligations (dependents, early marriage, marriage problems, etc.)	5.8	1.7	9.4
Financial problems (low income, cost of living, etc.)	11.5	7.8	14.8
Job problems (lack of enough jobs, poor job opportunities, laid off, etc.)	4.5	5.2	3.9
Educational problems (lack of education, poor education, lack of college, lack of skilled training, difficulties in completing further education, lack of secretarial or stenographic training, etc.)	30.4	40.0	21.8
Inexperience (lack of broad experience, travel, etc.)	3.3	5.2	1.6
Politics (not having the right connections, etc.)	0.8	0.9	0.8
Personality problems (unsure of self, indecision, self-consciousness, lack of confidence or desire, motivation or personality deficiencies or problems, uncertainty about goals, etc.)	9.1	11.3	7.0
Illness, physical condition, size, or health problems	1.2	1.7	0.8
Other	4.9	4.3	5.5
No problems or handicaps experienced	21.8	19.1	24.2
Don't know or no opinion	6.6	2.6	10.1
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Among women, limited education was also the most frequently mentioned handicap, although it was indicated only about half as often as among males. For the women, financial problems and family obligations appear to be important secondary limitations. Few persons felt they were much inhibited by not having the "right political connections" or by health problems.

Evidence shows these young people feel education is instrumental to a successful career and the lack of it is an impediment. Still, more than a quarter of those responding to this question felt they had had no problems or handicaps, or expressed no opinion about the matter.

Informants were also asked what things, if any, they would "do differently if [they] had it to do all over again?" The pattern of response is consistent with the previous results dealing with expressed handicaps (Table 23). Forty-three percent of the males and 30% of the females felt they would have gotten more academic education during the decade. If the percentages who regreted not working harder in high school or not having completed trade school education are added, the importance of education, as these young people now see it after 10 years of experience, is even greater.

Between 8 and 9% of the males thought they would have handled their military obligations differently, while smaller percentages felt they would have entered a different line of work, waited longer to get married, or left the local area. Among the females, at least 1 out of 10 felt that it would have been better to wait longer to get married.

A little more than one quarter of the group had no expressed regrets concerning their career experience during the post high school decade. While this percentage of "satisfied" persons is impressive, the other three quarters did express some dissatisfaction with their situations, their main complaint being inadequate education.

Recommendations to the Local Schools

We asked our informants how the local school systems could better prepare young people for careers after high school. They were also asked what advice, if any, they would offer to young people now enrolled in school in such an area. To the extent their insights constitute a valid reflection on the exigencies of growing up in Ontonagon Co., they may be judged potentially relevant to the situation of other young people now in school in rural areas.

Many respondents felt the academic program should be strengthened. Twenty-two percent thought more and better college preparatory courses should be offered. Another 20% urged more vocational training, and an additional 12% suggested improving the counseling programs.

Other recommendations included increasing the range and variety of courses to choose from, improving the discipline and requiring more effort on the students' part, recruiting better teaching staff and providing coursework in specific subjects, such as public speaking, sex education, communication skills, etc. A number indicated they thought

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TABLE 23. Estimates of what subjects would "do differently if [they] had it to do all over again" in the decade since high school, by Ontonagon Co. 1957 high school juniors and seniors

Action Category	Total %	Males %	Females %
Family (would have waited to marry, wouldn't have married so soon or so young, wouldn't have married, had so many children, etc.)	7.6	3.4	11.3
High school (would have worked/studied harder while still in elementary/secondary school, would have taken college prep courses, tougher courses while still in high school, would have taken school more seriously, prepared for college, etc.)	3.6	4.3	3.0
Line of work (would have changed type of work I went into, would have gotten a different job, gone into another field, taken a different major, gone into business, started my own business, etc.)	4.4	4.3	4.5
Academic education (would have gone to college after high school, gone to a different school, furthered my education, worked harder in college, finished school, taken or finished professional nursing training, gotten a degree, etc.)	36.0	42.7	30.1
Trade school education (would have gone to trade school, business or secretarial school, taken a course in business, gone to night school, taken a one year nursing course, etc.)	8.0	5.1	10.5
Travel and migration (would have moved away from home, traveled, gone to school *away* from home, gotten out of the local area, etc.)	4.0	2.6	5.3
Military service (would have joined the service, wouldn't have waited to be drafted, would have stayed in the service, etc.)	4.0	8.5	0.0
Personality (would have been more aggressive, decisive, learned self-confidence, sought help or treatment earlier, etc.)	0.8	0.8	0.7
Health (would have taken care of my health sooner, etc.)	0.4	0.8	0.0
Other	4.0	2.6	5.3
Would do nothing differently	24.4	20.5	27.8
Don't know or no opinion	2.8	4.3	1.5
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

consolidation of school districts was an essential condition for improvement of the school program.

Advice to Present Day Ontonagon County Youth

Informants were asked what recommendations they would have for a young person "now enrolled in school in Ontonagon Co. . . . regarding staying or moving away subsequent to his completing high school." Four percent advised definitely staying in the local area. Eight percent advised staying in the local community "if you can get a job and if you don't mind the disadvantages." Almost half of the group (47%) gave advice to leave the area to seek education and/or employment elsewhere; an additional 10% urged leaving "if you want better educational or occupational opportunities."

A few (about 2%) suggested leaving the area for a while and then returning, and others (6%) said to return only if jobs were available or "if you like the area." Nearly 11% remained neutral or equivocal on just what was the best strategy, while an almost equal proportion simply did not know or had no advice to offer. As expected, those who had left the county during the decade more often advised leaving than those who stayed in the area.

SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The accelerating rate of technological and social change in recent decades has affected all areas of our national life. Not only have such changes provided new opportunities and a higher standard of living for many people, but they have also meant new challenges and problems. Nowhere can this be better seen than in rural areas. Improvements in agricultural technology and the reduction in the demand for agricultural labor, consolidation of farm units, and the increasingly intricate linkage of the rural to the urban-industrial economy, have had an important impact on rural communities and on the careers of their young people. Rapidly changing conditions continually modify the career alternatives of these young people, and have required a high degree of adaptability on their part in obtaining education and employment and in deciding where they would like to live.

This study focused on some problems associated with migration and social mobility of rural youth. Our canvas was confined to a crucial period of the life cycle, from about 18 to 28. During this time-span numerous decisions converge concerning migration, further education, marriage and career. Our research strategy was longitudinal in that we solicited information from the subjects at two points in time—once near the end of high school and again about 10 years later.

The research site was a remote county in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. At one time its economy was among the thriving economies in the state. Today, while copper mining is still very important, the area fails to sustain a fully-developed, modern economy.

We chose this site for two reasons. First, we wished to maximize the rural outmigration phenomenon. Based on regional averages, Ontonagon Co. had a low level of living and a small proportion employed in manufacturing. It also had a long history of net outmigration. Second, we wanted to minimize the difficulty of data retrieval in the follow-up study. We felt that the informal network of friends and kin present in the Ontonagon Co. area would make it possible to readily locate our informants 10 years after graduation from high school.

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The situation of the present sample of students in 1957, as it emerges from our data, is that of a critical stage in their careers. It is a time of assessment of the many factors involved in, and the decisions affecting, later experience. There is a widespread, realistic anticipation of the necessity of leaving the area to obtain adequate employment or to get further education or training. Some of the students planned to leave on the basis of the simple intuition that such experience would be instrumental to their growth and independence. Although some had the familiar complaints about a local area ("people don't mind their own business"), certain of their attitudes had basis in objective fact. The post-high school education and vocational opportunities in the immediate area *were* inadequate or nonexistent. The students' sense of gloom about the area (only a third felt their community's future looked bright) reflected the sentiment of many local people. Most of the parents were agreeable to their children leaving for other places and expressed willingness to provide assistance during the process.

This is not to say, of course, that the students disliked the community in which they had grown up. Evidence points to a substantial attachment. While a majority expected to leave the area after high school, only a minority of them were actually looking forward to the prospect. Moreover, their residential preferences 20 years into the future reveal a considerable sentiment for the Ontonagon Co. area.

Ontonagon youth today. Many of these young people will be leaving tomorrow for the city.

Many of these young people exhibited exceedingly high occupational aspirations. Their migration expectations were instrumental in their attempts to realize high occupational goals and thus an integral part of their overall career strategy.

A majority of the subjects did subsequently move away from their home communities. Only a small number stayed in the area throughout the post high school decade. Most of those who left did so within the first several years. Many subjects moved initially for the direct purpose of obtaining further education, their destination being college towns. Others went to urban areas in the state and along the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan to find work.

The amount of mobility is quite surprising, with most of these young people having moved 5 or more times during the decade. Some had moved 8 or more times. A considerable amount of back-and-forth movement occurred between Ontonagon Co. and other places: about half the subjects moved away from, and back to, the county one or more times during the decade.

A little over half the males, and even a few females, served in the armed forces. More than half completed some form of additional training or education after high school, with almost a third of the entire group obtaining college training. Over 50% of those who attended college finished a 4-year degree, and about half of these subsequently obtained advanced education.

By 1968, the subjects were dispersed throughout the occupational structure. A goodly number had attained professional status. Both skilled and semi-skilled occupations were also well represented. Among females the highest proportion had worked in clerical jobs, while others had been employed in service trades and some professional and technical jobs. By the end of the 10-year period, however, only about a third of the women were working outside the home.

Occupational achievement was related to residence. Not only did persons who left their home communities generally do better than those who did not, but the level of the migrants' occupations varied with the size of the community in which they were living. Persons who lived in urban areas seemed to be faring better than those living in rural areas. Among the men, those living in small cities exhibited the highest level of occupational achievement.

Nearly half the subjects had attained incomes of $8,000 or more within 10 years of high school graduation. Fewer than ten percent reported incomes similar to those of their parents 10 years before. Even allowing for inflation, such trends imply a comparatively high overall degree of success among these former rural high school students.

Most of the young people had married during the decade, many within the first several years after high school. Mate choice and the timing of marriage was related to geographic mobility and occupational achievement. In general, the earlier the marriage took place after high school the more likely the mate would be from the home area. Persons who

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married early also tended to have children sooner after marriage and to have somewhat larger families, both absolutely and in the number of children born per year. Moreover, early marriage was associated with lower rates of migration out of the local area and with relatively modest educational and occupational achievement. It is easy to see a causal linkage in this sequence of events. It is a pattern in which earlier events tend to impose limits on later alternatives. Early marriage tends to be accompanied by early dependency, which results in reduced mobility and the advantages it makes possible, particularly further education and a wider range of occupational choice.

Most of our informants felt, in retrospect, that it is necessary for young people to leave the area after high school to pursue desirable career objectives. In addition, some evidently feel that such departure is important in establishing oneself as an independent adult and in gaining some degree of sophistication. While many seemed to leave the door open for returning, few specifically urged it as an objective. This would tend to reinforce the impression that many of these young people themselves will be more or less permanently located away from the local area, despite their widely expressed nostalgia and sentiment for Ontonagon Co.

The literature on rural-urban migration presents two essentially incompatible views of the potential migrant. In one view the migrant is seen as the prototype of economic man, ready to move to whatever destination in response to financial advantage. In the other, the migrant is seen as enmeshed in a network of friends, relatives and kin. He is viewed as being firmly tied to his birthplace and the process of migration is considered painful and socially costly.

Our data suggest that each view is an exaggerated characterization of contemporary migrants. We find that migration is generally viewed as normative behavior, and the process of migration is not considered *unduly* painful nor socially costly. It is also clear that many parents prepare their children for this event and expect they will move away.

We found attachment to the local area and to kin strong among many of the migrants. But this attachment, alleviated by occasional return trips, correspondence, telephone, and other sporadic contacts, was not viewed as incompatible with residence elsewhere, often a great distance away. Satisfactory adjustment of most migrants in destination areas appears to have been made with relatively little difficulty. At the same time, a large proportion benefitted from the mediation of friends and relatives in the areas of destination.

A considerable body of literature finds the rural migrant to the city at a disadvantage in the urban labor market. This disadvantage accrues, according to the literature, to those inadequately trained and inadequately attuned to urban life. We cannot unequivocally challenge these findings, but our cohort of youth exhibits remarkable achievement in income and status. There is reason to believe that the cohort studied may differ somewhat from other rural young people in the value placed on education as a medium for social mobility.

The existing literature on rural-urban migration rarely does justice to the phenomenon of return-migration. When the return-migrant is considered, he is often viewed as a failure in the urban labor market. Our data challenge the notion that the return-migrant has simply failed to adapt successfully elsewhere. A large proportion had returned for carefully calculated reasons, in some instances to render badly-needed services in the local area. Few had been failures elsewhere. Not an insignificant proportion of the return-migrants were, in reality, "multiple migrants." That is, they had moved away, then returned for various periods of time, only to move away again.

The overall record of our informants is one of a high frequency of mobility and an unusually high level of achievement, both educational and occupational. This is in contrast to the findings typically reported for rural youth in the literature, and offers considerable encouragement in terms of the capacity of such young people, at least from areas like Ontonagon Co., to cope with the many challenges and problems in finding a "niche" in a rapidly changing and increasingly urban society.

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